

August 21, 2019

Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister
Environment and Climate Change Canada
Ottawa

Dear Minister McKenna,

We write once again to urge that, with regard to the issue of managing our country's wastes, the Canadian government adopt a policy that is evidence-based and environmentally responsible.

We respectfully point out that the government's current policy fails to meet either of these criteria.

The Basel Convention urges developed countries such as Canada to take responsibility for recycling and disposing of our wastes in an environmentally sound and efficient manner **in our own country** and specifically refers to “the increasing desire for the **prohibition** of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal in other States, **especially developing countries.**”

We, and the overwhelming majority of Canadians, believe that Canada has the competence and has the responsibility to deal with our wastes in an environmentally sound and efficient manner in our own country and that we should stop exporting them to developing countries, as the Basel Convention urges.

We note that in a statement to media, your spokesperson, Sabrina Kim, gave the following reasons for the federal government's opposition to the Basel Ban amendment, which would ban the export of wastes to developing countries*:

- 1) By exporting our wastes to developing countries we are providing them with environmental and economic benefits.
- 2) Other countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Japan share Canada's perspective on the proposed amendment.

With regard to the first reason, for more than twenty years, previous Liberal and Conservative governments have claimed that exporting our wastes to developing countries benefits these countries economically and environmentally. The evidence, however, overwhelmingly contradicts this assertion. It is clear that the export of waste has not improved recycling anywhere in the world in those more than twenty years.

Developing countries are deluged with waste. They do not need additional waste from us to know how to recycle it. That is a sadly self serving policy that fails under the weight of the facts. If Canada truly cares about the building of recycling capacity in developing countries, we should export safe and benign recycling technology not waste.

With regard to the second reason, we wish to draw to your attention the fact that the government of Australia has [pledged to stop exporting its trash](#). At a meeting of the Council of Australian Governments on August 9, 2019 political leaders made a [commitment to phasing out exports of recyclable waste](#). Prime Minister Scott Morrison stated: "It's our waste and it's our responsibility" and said that he would like the date of the [ban on exporting waste to be as soon as is practicable](#).

We would like the government of Canada to show similar environmental responsibility and make a commitment to stop exporting our waste to developing countries.

We respectfully point out that there is simply no fact-based reason to justify Canada continuing to export hazardous and other wastes to developing countries. We urge the Trudeau government to be a forward thinking government of the present and of the future. Soon the Ban Amendment will enter into force with or without Canada. Canada

will have failed again to step up and lead in a world lacking leadership. This will be long remembered. On the other hand, timely leadership is never forgotten.

Canadians are calling on you to show environmental responsibility now and support the Basel Ban amendment, which needs the support of only two more countries to come into effect. We sincerely hope that you will not let them down.

We look forward with hope to receiving your response at the earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,



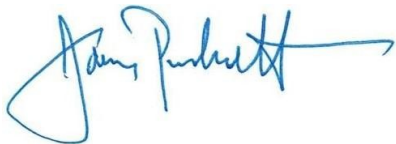
Kathleen Ruff, Director
RightOnCanada.ca



Theresa McClenaghan, Executive Director and Counsel
Canadian Environmental Law Association



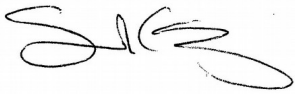
Beatrice Olivastri, CEO
Friends of the Earth Canada



Jim Puckett, Founder, Director
Basel Action Network



Pamela Miller
IPEN Co-Chair



Sarah King, Head of Oceans & Plastics campaign
Greenpeace Canada



Heather Marshall, Campaigns Director
Toronto Environmental Alliance



Dr. Olga Speranskaya, Co-Director
Health and Environmental Justice Support International

* Developing countries are defined in the amendment as countries not part of the EU, OECD and Liechtenstein.